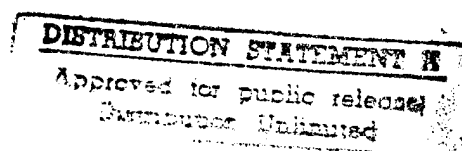
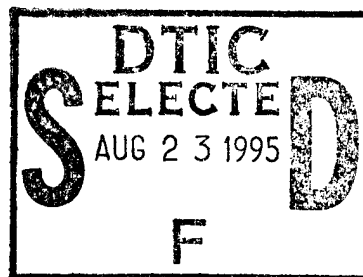


Hyper War, John Q. Public, and Television:  
War and the Information Revolution



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## Preface

One night John Q. Public watches as a news bulletin interrupts his favorite programming--someone has discovered that Somali children starve to death. Indeed, Somali children have starved to death for years. Tonight, however, it is "news."

Actors, models, moralists and moralizers, lit by the world's finest cameramen, point at this freeze-frame of horror like the chorus of a Greek drama. "How can you let this happen?" they ask. These moral points of view are with us always; forever, they rightly encourage us to help the needy, go to the aid of the weak and oppressed. We are strong, God knows; we owe the helpless our sustenance and guts. This is as human as breath, or food, or sex. Tonight, however, it is news.

The styles from Paris, the most credible sighting of UFOs over Iowa, the latest controversy over Michael Jackson's sexuality, all the entertainment broadcast over the airwaves in media's unending quest for ratings and increased revenues are for the moment pushed aside by a bloated stomach, dry hopeless eyes, the dying child brushing away--too like our own children for us to bear it--a swarm of flies. Horrified, John Q. Public demands, "Stop the war! Send the marines!"

He might as well say, "Give me an aspirin! Cure my headache! Give me a wife as beautiful as Vanna White! Give me a media revolution! Now!"

A few months later, again on television, a single dead American soldier's body is dragged through the streets of

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Mogadishu; this is sickening, yet it is the kind of scene that has been repeated in every war since the beginning of time. Every soldier who has been in a war has seen something like it. But tonight, for John Q. Public, it is "news."

Horried again, he demands, "Bring the troops home! Let the ungrateful bastards starve!" Our politicians jump out of their skins, and cut back flips in the air. Policy flips with them, a hoop the politicians jump back and forth through.

But can all this have any meaning? Perhaps it's a plot. Are the conspirators of some "media" trying to undermine American policy? Why are these images so powerful? Why does the eye turn to them, exactly as it does to the beautiful models who stand alongside Ginsu knives, cans of motor oil, food processors, tool-kits, youth ointments, tires, and every other form of wares imaginable by man?

All these "scenes" from the last decade of the 20th century, all these sound-bites, have one thing in common. All of them sell soap.

If war is an act of force to compel an enemy to do our will, television is an act of coercion to force a public to watch. We in the military produce good "scenes," good sound-bites. It is not the "truth" any military commander need fear. Nor is it censorship the reporter needs to fear as he does his duty to inform the public.

It is that the truth, on television, is for sale.

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### Abstract

The proclivity of the People to send military forces to low intensity conflicts, Hyper War, and Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) is historically destined to be short-lived. In an environment of direct, revolutionary, and yet unfocused media power, the military and the media face troubling dilemmas concerning their roles in the democratic process. The People, the "Third Leg" of Clausewitz's triangle are, for the immediate future, under the influence of media. But this proclivity of the People to acquiesce to, or to demand intervention in hopeless wars (and to demand retreat at the first sight of American blood) cannot be politically sustained—in the long term Hyper War and MOOTW cannot offer the People sufficient reward for the efforts expended. *Hyper War and MOOTW cannot remain growth industries.* For the present, however, the will of the People is the center of gravity in low intensity, Hyper War, and MOOTW operations, and these operations are inadvertently driven by media.

Hyper War, John Q. Public, and Television:  
War and the Information Revolution

A New Theory of Media and Revolution.

Every generation makes its own mistakes. I believe the worst mistake military intellectuals have made in this generation is their failure to properly analyze the revolutionary impact of real-time media on military operations.

What Has Changed? Live Coverage.

Real-time media has an effect on operations as profound as the introduction of the levee-en-masse during the French Revolution, or the appearance of the machine gun at the beginning of World War I. But this power of media is not the cause, but rather an effect, of changes brought about by the larger Information Revolution. These revolutionary changes—other effects of which include, 1) information accessibility; 2) speed of data exchange; 3) public knowledge of the increasing accuracy and lethality of weapons, weapons which the public can *literally* watch, through combat cameras, attack a target; i.e., weapons that themselves become media events; 4) the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the public knowledge and fear thereof; and especially 5) the visceral impact of real-time images of mayhem on a populace otherwise sheltered from the horrors of war—have created a shock wave that acts as a toggle switch to the People's will, and strikes indirectly at the capacity to create and sustain coherent policy. Simply put, if the People's will changes day to day as they watch the tube, is coherent policy even possible?

Wars can now be won or lost on television.<sup>1</sup>

Always, the will of the People has been a critical target of military action. But I contend that across the series of revolutions of the past two centuries, the will of the People has become more and more the very target and object, as well as the prime mover and impetus, of war and near-war. Now, in these small Hyper Wars,<sup>2</sup> the will of the People is the center of gravity.

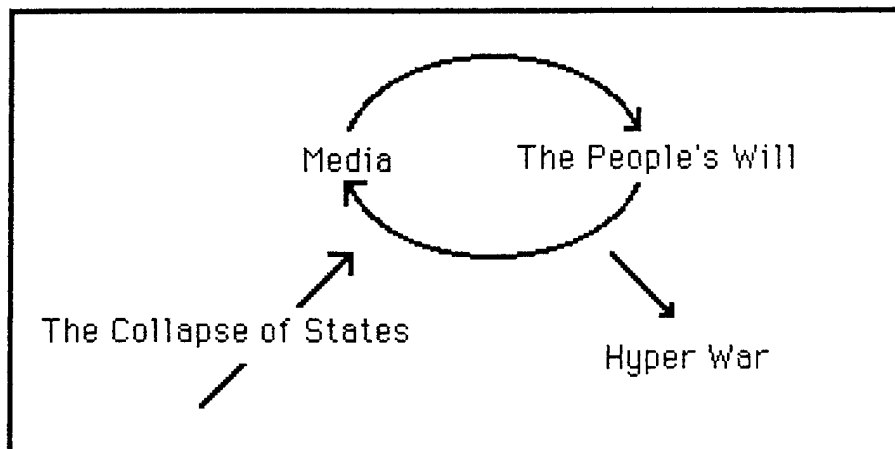
In this uncertain atmosphere, the 21st century operational commander will apply his "art," and carry with his decisions the triumph or failure of policy. The rise of media power in an Electronic/Information Age (corresponding to the arrival of what the Tofflers call *The Third Wave* of warfare)<sup>3</sup> demands the operational commander reeducate his staff to effectively plan in a media-electrified environment. Media is to Hyper War what gravity is to physics—though many other forces act upon Hyper War, nothing about Hyper War can make sense without recognizing media's central role. Staff planners need literally to create a new way to think about war and media. In the calculations of operational art, it is too late by the time we look up from our commander's estimate to ask, "But if we do this, how will it look on television?"

### **Background.**

There are now several examples in modern history of Hyper Wars or MOOTW directly impacted upon by media—Lebanon, Rwanda, Haiti, and Somalia. It is the thesis of this paper that media interacted with the political process in drawing us into each of these conflicts, and that media at times inadvertently directed our policies; that in the near future we will see more of the same; yet that media professionals are as helpless as we in con-

fronting the new complexities and challenges posed by the changes brought about by the Information Revolution.

The bottom line is this: we make wars; media, in the Information Age, sends us to them.



This paper will narrowly address one aspect of media—its influence upon the policy of limited war, or MOOTW, or war at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict, or whatever one wishes to call it. I call it Hyper War. I refer in this paper to the kinds of humanitarian and police actions American troops find themselves involved in today, peace keeping that degenerates into peace enforcement, food distribution that turns into televised gunfights. Hyper War is policy war with St. Vitus' Dance. It is the impact of real-time satellite coverage on Hyper War, or MOOTW, that we can empirically analyze and measure.

### Theory.

It is conventional wisdom, among both military intellectuals and futurists, such as the Tofflers, to look at the world of media, satellite coverage, computer interface, C<sup>4</sup>I<sup>2</sup>, and the information superhighway, and say we live in an Information Revolution.



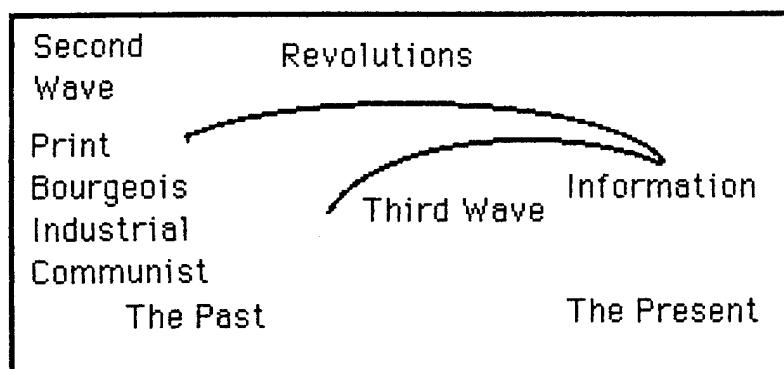
However, from the analytical perspective, it is hardly more helpful to call this information age "revolutionary" (implying something entirely "new" or "critically discontinuous"), and leave it at that, than it is to call it reactionary, or magic. If there has been a successive series of discrete, "discontinuous" revolutions—Print, Bourgeois, Industrial, Communist, and now Electronic/Information, or some set of "waves" of history, First Wave—agrarian, Second Wave—industrial, and Third Wave—information, each unique and hence excluding identity with or continuity in terms of the others—then any revolution we are now in can never be anything more than a kind of empirical mystery to us.

I propose a simpler explanation: let us conceive of revolution differently. Let us posit that there has been one single *continuous* Revolutionary Age; one of the critical aspects of that *continuous* Revolutionary Age has been media—whether spoken, printed, or electronically disseminated; media is not the key, but it is a key to the historical unfolding of each hyper-kinetic revolutionary period. If this is true, what we confront is a *continuous* (as opposed to discontinuous) media influence upon revolution. We are indeed in an Information Revolution now; but its ascent to power began not with the computer chip but with the printing press and has continued, at an accelerating pace (at times a revolutionary and hyper-kinetic pace), for hundreds of years; its vicissitudes are measurable, and to a degree consistent. In this revolution, the People always respond (as we see them do now) to one of revolution's central features, the exhortations of a new and compelling media. In this *continuous* forward-moving accelera-

tion of access to information, *the People have become steadily more empowered.*<sup>4</sup>

From this point of view there has been one *continuous* Age of Revolution,<sup>5</sup> with five phases: Print, with its explosion of free ideas in the hands of anyone who could gain access to a press; Bourgeois, with its conviction that news was a free market commodity to be bought and sold by a middle class, without the sanction of either church or a ruling royal elite; Industrial, with the mass producing and distributive power that expanded media power as it expanded other productive powers; Communist, with its ideologizing function that re-valued all news and made all news ideological by fiat; and Electronic/Information, that now shatters the grip of previous Communist and middle class sanctions, and the moral and ethical values that previously restrained news coverage.

One can characterize time as a wave, passing through history, and the present as that wave's crest. Behind the present—with the forward momentum of the Information Revolution—the momentum of past revolutions are always acting upon the present. And each "present" becomes more and more complex, more hyper-kinetic.



All revolutions continue to act on the present.

The last revolutionary period, the struggle between Communism and capitalism, and its result, the collapse of Soviet Communism and the triumph of capital, electrified the power of competitive capitalist media and introduced the hyper-kinetic era of Hyper War, and MOOTW.

**Hyper War and MOOTW Are Not Growth Industries.**

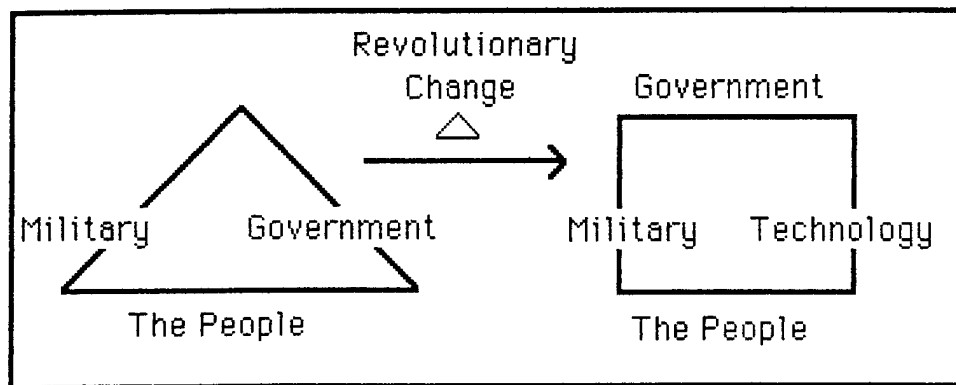
These small wars will not replace the wars described by Clausewitz. We will see total war again, and its calculus will not correspond to the models of Bosnia and Somalia. These small wars are interstitial, an historical adjustment to the political repercussions of the fall of the Soviet Union, the unleashing of ethnic conflict, and the collapse of states.<sup>6</sup>

**Hyper War, Live Television and (Not Marshall McLuhan, but) Carl Von Clausewitz.**

War is the most complex of all forms of human intercourse, and policy war is, as Clausewitz pointed out nearly two hundred years ago, not less, but more complex than total war. Hyper War, with policy war's complexity added to modern politics' changeableness and volatility, is the most complex sort of limited war the nation state has yet faced.

I disagree with John Keegan<sup>7</sup> and Martin Van Creveld,<sup>8</sup> who claim Clausewitz is outdated. This is humbug. But, as Michael Handel points out, Clausewitz's theory has been outflanked by technology. Before the Industrial Revolution, Clausewitz created his Trinitarian Analysis—his triangle of the Military, the Government, and the People, as the three legs upon which war stood. Handel argues compellingly that the Industrial Revolution, coming

along just after Clausewitz's death in 1832, changed the way this triangle works, and that now the triangle might be squared, as technologies, along with economics, make war more complex, and infinitely more difficult to analyze.



Squaring the Clausewitzian Triangle, with the advent of Technology as a complex intervening variable.

With the advent of the Electronic/Information Age, I argue that war has now become so complex that even the Trinitarian analysis fails to describe some of its modern parameters.

My argument is further that, as the interconnectivity between previously discrete elements of political intercourse—the press, economics, scientific advances, lethality of weapons, military doctrines, etc.—becomes more fibrous and hence more substantively interrelated, war is destined to become more complex still.

Thus in Hyper War the intervening variables of all wars (friction, politics, the will of the People, etc.) act, because of the limited objectives of policy makers and the limited commitment of the People, like a Rubik's cube no computer, or Clausewitzian operational genius, could possibly solve. The People, now more directly "informed" by a capitalist media with virtually unlimited influence—queried, polled, watched nightly by the Nielson ratings

by media analysts and moment to moment by politicians—have, in modern policy war, become the dominant leg of the square.<sup>9</sup>

In this environment, media professionals try their best to report what they conceive to be the truth.

**The Revolutionary Situation as Pure, Ideal Momentum.**

In theory, once set in motion, a revolution, like Clausewitzian "ideal" war, moves forward inexorably. But in fact many of the same intervening variables that make war "real" rather than "ideal" make this media revolution a fitful process. An ideal Information Revolution, like "ideal war," becomes, after many forces act upon it to mediate it and redirect its momentum, a real revolution of international sales, satellite sales, computer company competition, data banks, cellular phones, and news network competition.

Furthermore, the focus of media reporting itself shifts its footing constantly as media stories unfold in a constantly changing environment. One moment the dominant story is hunger; the next it is a gunfight in which U.S. Rangers are killed, and their bodies mutilated; neither story is consciously *directed* at policy, but both impact policy like a bullet hitting a plate glass window.

**MOOTW as Policy by Other Means—An Inherent Contradiction.**

Anyone who has been involved in one of these confusing operations, anyone who for that matter has reported on one, knows that Hyper War is filled with contradictions—UN direction, public opinion, political will, multiple adversaries refusing to cooperate, contradictory orders, etc. Hyper War is policy tied into a knot.

Further, Hyper War is a theoretical contradiction in and of itself—it is People's war, in that the American People (along with the Government) decide whether to intervene and how far to go; and yet it is policy war, in that the People's interest in Hyper War can only be marginal, because Hyper War finally benefits the People nothing but moral satisfaction. What could a television viewer from Wisconsin possibly gain from U.S. intervention to make war against Mohammed Aided? And yet that same viewer can lose his son or daughter, to such a war.

Everything Clausewitz said about "the value of the object" retains its validity even into an Electronic/Information Age, and yet real-time television coverage has added a new dimension of complexity. Now the "value of the object" can be instantaneously recalculated with each news broadcast. The People can now initiate, or trigger, via media tripwire, a war, and they can equally paradoxically stop it, again via media tripwire.

Hyper War is war at times operated by the People's TV remote control sets. If this is democracy, it is democracy gone haywire.

Across the Age of Revolution, from 1450 until the present, through its Print, Bourgeois, Industrial, Communist, and Electronic/Information permutations, the People have become better and better informed, and more and more *directly* powerful. Unfortunately there is rarely logic or continuity, let alone thorough analysis, in the information John Q. Public receives from television. Even the wonderful work of reporters like Ted Koppel is often watched piecemeal. In MOOTW and Hyper War, the People are implicitly and yet *directly* tasked, as part of their democratic re-

sponsibilities, to decide policy; yet their decisions are not counter-weighted by any depth of commitment, any point-of-reference that the price to be paid is necessary. Indeed, the very instrument which showed the People Somalia in the first place, the television, also demonstrates every night that death is bloodless, angels attend the righteous, every problem can be fixed by the 28 minute break of a family sitcom, and even death itself can be overcome by the doctors of *Chicago Hope*. Hyper War is not World War II, with its deadly threat to democracy easily perceived by the average citizen. Hyper War, initiated by television, is *Jeopardy*, played for life and death stakes, by players who finally may not believe it is real. When they see what might happen to their sons and daughters, they may yell, "Stop!"<sup>10</sup>

#### What Has Not Changed? War's Fundamental Nature.

Nothing can change the fundamental nature of war.

War, even Hyper War, must gain somebody something, or it is crazy. That something-to-be-gained must, I argue, be more than abstract. The object must be gold, water, food, oil, security for our children or our economic interests, an exorcism of the fear of want. The objective of all war must answer some human need beyond obeying the vague order, "Do something," when our People see human suffering. From the People's standpoint, "Do something"—acting not on a national interests model of realpolitik—but rather acting according to the myths of movies, emotions, or morality, generates Hyper War and MOOTW. Moral rectitude is one of the most important concepts of western thought: it is also, as war's philosophers from Machiavelli to Clausewitz have pointed out, one of the shaki-

est of all martial and political concepts. Moral rectitude is the rail along which Hyper War and MOOTW run, and it is not a rail so much as a thread. It shifts nightly, according to whether the news reports come from Cairo or Tel Aviv, or show grateful tribesmen or anti-U.S. demonstrators. It is my argument that this slender moral thread, important as it is to our personal lives, will break as the violence ascends to an ear-splitting level. This in turn makes U.S. forces in Hyper War all the more vulnerable.

In short, any determined enemy, even a Mohammed Aideed, may beat our forces in Hyper War, because the People will only value a bloody victory if the object is of vital national interest.

#### Media/Military Roles and the Dilemma of Democracy.

If one sees the last five revolutions as a continuous Revolutionary Age, then one immediately perceives that real-time media produces a shift in the equation that the People use for going to war and staying at war; yet I again insist that the paradigm shift is not discontinuous, as some analysts argue, but *continuous*; if one reads the five phases of revolution as having a direction—Print, with its paradigm shift concerning the dissemination of religious ideas; Bourgeois, with its paradigm shift creating in the minds of the People enduring concepts of economic freedom and the rights of men; Industrial, with its shifts of emphasis from agriculture to business and competitive free labor; Communist, with its paradigm shift of ideologies completely re-orienting the relations of workers to employers; and Electronic/Information, which now empowers the People not only to read about but to watch, and judge, live and in real-time, political events world wide, and to



impact immediately upon policy decisions via ratings and opinion polls—then one sees a *continuity* across several centuries, the common direction of which has been the empowerment, sometimes for better and sometimes for worse, of the People, via media.<sup>11</sup>

The People, in a democratic and media age, possess real political power. As war is the continuation of policy by other means, the People have a direct impact and—in the hyper-kinetic revolutionary circumstances in which modern low intensity military operations take place—a decisive impact upon Hyper War and MOOTW.

**Media as Capitalist—Cut Throat Competition.**

Hyper War, from the media perspective, is world theatre. There is a simple formula, from the standpoint of the television news producer, to aggrandize his or her own company's position in the cut throat free world market: 1) find a good story, with sex, violence, whatever; 2) approach it viscerally, so it *looks and sounds* even sexier, more disastrous—the clearer and more extreme, frankly, the better; 3) videotape it; 4) edit that tape to achieve maximum shock value, within the bounds of the audience's capacity to bear it, i.e., within aesthetic bounds; 5) put it on the air, and test it. If the audience responds, 6) put it on again, and again and again. If they can't take their eyes off it (a producer's dream come true), 7) run it as long as it commands their attention, and 8) use its ratings, its high audience share, to make your company rich, to compete more effectively in the broad arena of world-wide media competition. You will note that I have not specified any consciously political motives<sup>12</sup> to the formula I lay out above, any left or right wing, liberality or conservatism:

media is business, and business cannot at its essence be either liberal or conservative. I posit no restrictions of "taste," beyond exercising an aesthetic judgment concerning what might be too disgusting for the audience to bear. The chart below demonstrates an equality, in the strictest and most rigorous analytical use of the term "EQUALS (=)," among stories:

THE O.J. SIMPSON TRIAL = THE RWANDA DISASTER = MICHAEL JACKSON'S SEXUAL PROBLEMS = THE DRAMA OF THE BOBBITT FAMILY = KING LEAR.
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Media is business, big, big business. It has a rigorous canon of moral values, and lives and dies by it; but the point is ratings.<sup>13</sup>

My argument is that the competitive nature of capitalism makes any "management" of this media revolution (as if an idea such as "managing" a revolution could make sense under any circumstances) completely untenable. What I'm saying is this: *media executives themselves cannot control what they put on the air, and this is the most important implication of our analyzing the media revolution as a true revolution, and not just as the results of a more than usually "intrusive" free press.* In this revolution, Ted Turner can influence, but not fundamentally change the objective circumstances in which media professionals compete for audience share covering Hyper War or MOOTW; certainly the operational commander, or even the National Command Authority, cannot fundamentally modify the approach of media professionals themselves caught in a dynamic, tidal wave, of change.

Thus, "handling the media" via PAO staffs is a concept akin to handling a wildly fluctuating stock market; plans to control

media access, such as press pooling, restricting access to "friendly" reporters, etc., doom themselves from the beginning due to faulty analysis of the problem; and, most importantly, any form of censorship is humbug. These are imaginary cures, to an imaginary disease, with an imaginary cause.<sup>14</sup>

Simply put, in an Information Revolution, information cannot be "controlled."

### The Political Power of the Image.

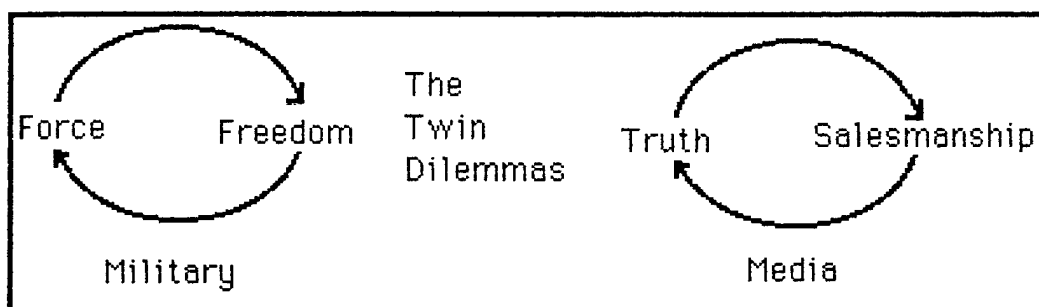
There is one further critical element we have not analyzed sufficiently—that is the revolutionary impact of the real-time image, arriving directly from the battlefield into the homes of the People. Critically, wars have often been fought, from the viewpoint of military professionals, precisely to keep such images away from their families at home.<sup>15</sup> Yet, as I said, Hyper War and MOOTW are, from the media perspective, world theatre. The real-time electronic image is a censor's nightmare; it is shocking, visceral, and seems deceptively to tell the whole story.<sup>16</sup> Yet media, for all its sincere attempts to get at the truth, will not and cannot, in the present revolutionary competitive media environment, substantively separate the commander's moral imperative from that of an O.J. Simpson who may or may not have killed his wife. Both are exactly and precisely "equal." Both are news. Both attract audience share. Both sell soap. Military professionals, operating at one end of this see-saw, and the People, watching in their homes on the other, both generally lack any real grasp of *how and why* these images of violence, sex, heartbreak, and tragedy are so compelling. But the bottom line is, the sound-

byte and the brutal image are the methamphetimine of television production. And any media entity—ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN—is incapable of censoring itself to a level below that of its competition.

Media professionals too are swept along in a tide of revolutionary change. Media is not tempered by a JCS; it has no NCA; it responds by analysis, and trial and error; that we call the results of media scrutiny on military operations the "CNN effect" testifies to the murderous level of competition—ask the executives at the previously omnipotent ABC, NBC, and CBS, all working eighty hour weeks to effectively compete.

#### On the Horns of a Dilemma.

Media reporters and a democracy's soldiers pursue two of the world's most difficult professions, each *directly* addressing the world's most complex problem—war. In terms of the approach to war taken by a democratic media, or the military forces of a democratic nation, both operate on the horns of a dilemma.



For the military man wishing to protect democratic and humanitarian values in the last decade of the 20th century, the two poles of his dilemma are 1) the use of force, as a means, in Hyper War and MOOTW, and 2) the ideals towards which this force must, if war is to have any long-term meaning, work. For the media profes-

sional, the two poles are 1) the need to find, and report, the "truth," about Hyper War and MOOTW, and 2) the requirements of salesmanship, which after all must form the bottom line upon which any media enterprise operates, especially in a revolutionary world of free markets and limitless capitalist competition.

These stresses reach a near breaking-point in the politically hyper-kinetic world of Hyper War and MOOTW.

**Continuity, Yes-Linearity, No.**

*Media professionals cannot make the impact of all these kinetic factors on MOOTW linear and predictable any more than military professionals can.* No media professional reporting on a famine in Somalia could possibly have anticipated the confrontation of U.S. Rangers and Aideed, live and in real-time. But—because of a combination of financial competition and the relative immaturity of media policies governing what is appropriate for broadcast in the satellite coverage environment, as well as a relative unsophistication of the People towards the shocking images that any war produces—for the present, any image that gives a network a competitive edge will likely be used on television, regardless of its effects on policy. And I mean any image. Yet, precisely because this is a true revolutionary environment, media professionals will continue to be as surprised as military professionals by the direction their stories take the public.

**Conclusions.**

"But if we do this, how will it look on television?"

When I worked as a reserve intelligence officer on the J-2 staff at USCENTCOM during Operation Restore Hope, this question

haunted us like the Ghost of Christmas Future. As a television writer and producer in my civilian life, and a graduate of the UCLA Film School, I felt a special responsibility to the troops in Mogadishu. I strongly felt TV had played not the role, but a role, in putting the troops there in the first place.

The Somalia "mission," however succinctly the CENTCOM staff had written the mission statement, seemed to me then, and does now, unthinkably complex: feed the hungry; use force to stop the fighting; neutralize the bad guys, but never harm the innocent; achieve maximum effectiveness, but never embarrass the politicians; affect no collateral damage, and achieve surgical precision—operate like a brain surgeon on chaos, on a whirlwind; spill no blood, show no pain, say, "No sweat," except with smiles for the folks back home. Finally, that mission was, "Win, but don't hurt anybody, even the enemy. Especially, don't get anybody killed in a way that will look bad on TV."

I don't know how to break this to everybody, but all real ways of killing people look bad on TV.

Revolutions attack not only our institutions, but also our moral center of gravity. It is my belief that Hyper War and MOOTW are in part an attempt to find a new moral orientation in a revolutionary world, a method by which to re-introduce the certainty of moral meaning to our policies.

It is a sub-thesis of this paper that media is powerful, has been powerful since the invention of the printing press, and will continue to grow more and more powerful. Much of this power has been marvelously applied: I believe that American media and

American culture contributed at least as much to the collapse from within of Communism as American cruise missiles and Star Wars programs. Media was only one revolutionary force that contributed to the collapse of Soviet Communism, yet it was an important one: the conflict was fought peacefully in terms of both weapons of mass destruction and MTV, precision guided munitions and Levi's and movies; finally, it was not barrage artillery but barrage advertising which assaulted the sensibilities of socialist peoples in a way with which anachronistic Communist propaganda, the product of an out-dated revolutionary era, could not compete.

I believe at every briefing the commander attends, some highly trained staff officer should be asking himself the question, "How will this affect us if it shows up on the TV news?" I believe that staff officer should analyze media in terms of the capital-driven "Information Age" environment in which we actually live, not like Alice through a looking glass, hoping to meet Ernie Pyle rather than Geraldo Rivera on the other side. Hope is not a method. Media is with us to stay; they are a free society's pen, and the military is its sword.

One last point. I believe war has always been confusing. I believe that the military forms the force that stands behind and sustains all noble American ideals. But this is not Shakespeare, in which military men speak always in iambic pentameter and leap with dazzling agility from idea to idea; it is not even a Chuck Norris movie, in which we can fight fifteen choreographed enemies and emerge with nothing but a "flesh wound" or a scar that makes us even handsomer than we were at the start. As the Bible says,

"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers." Revolution has made soldiers actors in a non-linear television drama; that drama threatens to become an empirical nightmare, or even worse, a kind of drugless, lousy acid trip in which we can't figure out whether we're coming or going. It is only through constant assessment, reassessment, and adaptation that we can have any hope of, if not staying up with the changes confronting us, at least falling less far behind than any emerging Caligula. Because another Caligula is always coming.

And he may understand revolution better than we.

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<sup>1</sup> At least, *some kinds of wars* can be won or lost on television. These are policy wars, or Hyper Wars, small wars with a political object of low value—comparable to the cabinet wars that attended the revolutionary changes of the 18th and 19th centuries. There has been no broad, large scale war since the advent of real-time satellite coverage. We have to leave to intuition, or to futurists, whether television (or some new emerging media) can affect the outcome of total war.

<sup>2</sup> I borrow this concept from COL John Warner, and expand it, or do some violence to it, according to one's point-of-view.

<sup>3</sup> Toffler, Alvin and Heidi. *War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1993.

<sup>4</sup> New and compelling media—the Gutenberg Bible, in one's own language, during the Print Revolution; the economic theories of Adam Smith and the political writings of Tom Paine and Thomas Jefferson, during the Bourgeois Revolutions; the rise of science and empiricism, via professional writings, spread worldwide by an international press, during the Industrial Revolution; the writings of Karl Marx, and the political tracts of Lenin, Trotsky, and Mao Zedong, during the Communist Revolutions; and the introduction of the personal computer, which has revolutionized communications, and television, which has mesmerized the world, during the Electronic/Information Revolution. The point is, in all cases, some media played a critical role in each economic or political revolution.

<sup>5</sup> I recognize that this is a conceptual use of the term



"revolution," and that it might raise more questions, in some larger sense, than it answers. But this is an experimental paper, and its purpose is to try to answer questions previous models have failed to answer. Hence, for our purposes here, "revolution" has two distinct meanings—the common historical one, of a set of events producing certain results at certain times; and a conceptual one, that of an over-arching trend in history which may recur in a series of epochs, so long as the trend gives the series a definable continuity.

<sup>6</sup> This theory exists for the pursuit of the line of questioning in this paper only; it is not suggested to replace other field theories that might better cover total war, economics, or politics aside from the interface of military and media forces. As I stated earlier, this theory is only directed at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict—what we now call Military Operations Other Than War. I doubt whether public opinion can be reversed when roused to total war; or whether huge army groups facing one another with massed firepower can be reversed from their objectives by media images; in any case, these questions are far beyond the scope of this paper. It is enough to know that Hyper War and MOOTW are to a large extent media driven. The implications of that fact compel this and other strategic and operational reassessments.

<sup>7</sup> John Keegan, *A History of Warfare*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.

<sup>8</sup> Van Creveld, Martin. *Technology and War: From 2000 BC to the Present*. New York: Free Press, 1989.

<sup>9</sup> Even Government leaders are influenced by media: Ronald Reagan admitted to being moved by media images to reintroduce the Marines to Lebanon in 1982, and George Bush responded to the horrible images of suffering from Somalia in 1990. Bob Woodward, *The Commanders*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991.

<sup>10</sup> Again, our evidence, Vietnam after Tet, Lebanon after the Marine Barracks Bombing; Somalia after the Oct 93 shoot out, points only to Hyper War. In total war, the equation by which the People decide whether to continue a war may be completely different.

<sup>11</sup> I argue that fascist revolutions are Peoples' revolutions exactly as Communist revolutions were. In them, like in Communists revolutions, the compelling media was propaganda, the deliberate precursor to the non-deliberate influences of a visceral, shocking real-time media.

<sup>12</sup> I leave the problem of unconscious motives to others more qualified, but I think it does raise some interesting questions.

<sup>13</sup> I will be accused of cynicism in equating the news value of the O.J. Simpson trial to *King Lear*. But I don't mean to make this equation cynically at all, but analytically.

<sup>14</sup> As Jean-Paul Sartre said in *St. Genet*, "If one enters an imaginary sum into his equation, all his results become imaginary as well."

<sup>15</sup> Chester Nimitz said, "War is one contest in which it is best to be on the visiting team."

<sup>16</sup> Last year over 70 media professionals were killed covering wars around the world; reporters at times demonstrate a dogged determination in the pursuit of truth that beggars eulogy.

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